

'STOOP'-ID CITY

Residents oppose taking of their steps and fences

By Aaron Short
The Brooklyn Paper

A man's home may indeed be his castle, but on one Greenpoint street, the stoop is an entirely different matter.

The city has told several Monitor Street residents that they must remove wrought iron fences and front stoops — some more than 100 years old — because they are on city-owned land.

Two weeks ago, a Department of Design and Construction official told more than a dozen households on Monitor Street that their fences and stoops were "private improvements" on public property and must be removed to make way for new sewers and water mains.

"Should you wish to save the encroachments in order to reinstall them on your private property, you will need to remove them yourself prior to the start of construction," the official wrote. "If you do not remove them, the city



The city wants to take part of Arlene Reischer's property on Monitor Street in Greenpoint for street work. She's not pleased.

contractor will do so at no cost to you, but we cannot guarantee the condition of any encroachments removed in this way."

The letter "pissed off" Arlene

Reischer, who has lived in her Monitor Street house for 28 years. She claims the property is hers. Indeed, the city installed water mains in the same place 28 years

ago and did not call for the property to be forfeited then.

"They want to take away our fences and we'll have these air vents within what they claim is city property," said Reischer. "For a hundred years, they haven't considered it city property, but all of a sudden they've decided it is."

But the city asserts that the fences and other "improvements" are in fact on public property and that the land is needed for updated water mains.

The street redesign is a component of a \$15-million infrastructure project to add new utility pipes under Nassau Avenue and several side streets. Repaving of Nassau Avenue began in April last year with minimal disruption and has advanced with little controversy.

But the city's request to permanently take the property and enlarge the sidewalk on Monitor Street struck Councilman Steve

See **STOOP** on page 3



Tennis players Glenn Blake (left) and Robert Cooper are upset about fee hikes.

PAY TO PLAY

City's new fees enrage tennis players

By Gary Bulso
The Brooklyn Paper

Tennis players are raising a racket over a scheme to double the fee to play the sport of kings on outdoor public courts, part of a citywide athletic fee hike that could make it more expensive to stay fit.

Under a quietly announced Parks Department proposal, tennis fees will jump from \$100 to \$200 a year, and from \$7 to \$15 per hour, an effort to generate more revenue from public athletics.

Tennis players were obviously not in love with the idea.

"Doubling the fees is unreasonable," said Robert Cooper, a Park Slope resident who was finishing a match Wednesday at the indoor Prospect Park Tennis Center on Parkside Avenue. "It's not showing any fairness to the general public."

Hogan is a licensed child-birth assistant at her shop, Providence Day Spa on Atlantic Avenue and Smith Street. She had worked as treasurer for the parent group for at least

See **PTA** on page 9



Tennis, no one?

By Gary Bulso
The Brooklyn Paper

The tennis bubble atop the New York Sports Club on Boerum Place collapsed after the heavy snow last Tuesday.

No one was injured in the deflation near Dean Street, but it took a few days before all was

right in the tennis world.

It's not the first time this season that heavy snowfall collapsed a tennis bubble. During the original blizzard, the big protective dome over the courts in the Parade Grounds in Kensington also lost its loftiness, though it was also quickly repaired.

Even a Parks official blasted the hike.

between food or medical care," said Flatbush resident and tennis player Glenn Blake.

See **TENNIS** on page 4



A PTA treasurer at PS 29 in Cobble Hill has been charged with embezzling tens of thousands of dollars for fertility treatments.

Mom-strosity

Cops say PTA treasurer stole many thousands from Cobble Hill school

By Andy Campbell
The Brooklyn Paper

The former treasurer for PS 29's parent association is facing more than just a call to the principal's office after she allegedly embezzled thousands of dollars from the group last fall.

Cops said on Monday that 43-year-old Providence Hogan wrote two unaccounted checks worth a total of \$5,500 in the PTA's budget of the Cobble Hill school late last

year — but that sum could be the tip of Hogan's shieving iceberg, as cops have confirmed other alleged thefts.

About 100 parents stormed the Henry Street building on Monday night, demanding to know how much of their hard-earned bake sale cash had been pilfered. But PTA officials — citing an ongoing investigation — gave little information except that the new treasurer found a "gap" in the group's tax return this

semester.

"I'm disappointed," said Dominik Balsamo, who regularly picks his grandkids up from kindergarten. "You trust in someone and they take the money you put toward your kid's future."

Hogan is a licensed child-birth assistant at her shop, Providence Day Spa on Atlantic Avenue and Smith Street. She had worked as treasurer for the parent group for at least

See **PTA** on page 9

When Obama met Restler

By Aaron Short
The Brooklyn Paper

Who's that tall gawky guy with Lincoln Restler?

Barack Obama got a chance to mingle with Williamsburg District Leader Lincoln Restler last month at a White House Christmas Party — and all we got was one of the greatest political pictures since a young Bill Clinton was snapped shaking hands with then-President Kennedy in 1963.

Restler, a former Obama campaign

volunteer, piqued the attention of the White House political office after he won a dramatic, razor-thin victory last September, defeating a candidate backed by the Brooklyn Democratic machine.

So on Dec. 14, Restler, joined by his campaign manager and co-founder of the New Kings Democrats, Sami Baker, took the bus to Washington for the house party — and got to mingle with guests such as Rev. Al Sharpton, Gen. Wesley Clark, and administration staffers

Valerie Jarrett and Pete Rouse.

Security to get into the White House was understandably tight — after two unwanted guests blitzed through several checkpoints at a state dinner last year — and both Restler and Baker were scanned and surveyed with a metal wand several times.

Once inside, Baker and Restler checked out the spread, which included several meat and potato small plates and champagne.

"They had everything," said Baker.

"But I was too excited to eat. There were blue carrots. That was really cool."

After Restler schmoozed with other young, up-and-coming politicians from throughout the country, Baker corralled the state committeemen to stand in the photo line to meet the president.

"Military officers introduce you and you get to talk with him and the first lady for a little bit and they take a photograph," said Baker.

Restler never knew that the result-

See **RESTLER** on page 4



Barack Obama hangs out with Williamsburg's rising-star politico Lincoln Restler at the White House Christmas party last year. Joining Restler was his campaign manager Sarah Baker and Michelle Obama.



Tunnel vision

Prospect Park draped in white has become a regular occurrence this snowy winter.

To 'Hell' and back!

Carroll Street eyesore to be dismantled

By Gary Bulso
The Brooklyn Paper

A developer will dismantle the illegal 40-foot addition atop a 19th-century building on Carroll Street, a project that had become so controversial that it led the city to rezone the neighborhood.

Builder Isaac Fischman of Borough Park told the Carroll Gardens Neighborhood Association of his decision on Wednesday night, ending a six-year saga over the rooftop extension that neighbors had dubbed "the Hell House."

"Everyone will get what they



The developer has agreed to remove the unfinished — and illegal — four-story addition atop this Carroll Gardens building.

want," Fischman said, adding that he will forge ahead with a plan to convert the soon-to-five-story building between Hoyt and Bond streets into 37 condo units.

Let the celebration begin! "I'm having a barbecue in my backyard when the steel comes down!" said Chris McVoy, a neighbor of the building who has protested the addition for five years.

Fischman's decision to trim part of the building mass of rooftop steel will likely end the impasse over the \$15-million renovation, a saga that mirrored others in neighborhoods that are experiencing gentrification.

In the case of 333 Carroll St., the controversy came to symbolize the vulgar excess of last decade's development boom.

The structure was the brainchild of controversial architect Robert Scarno, who was hired in 2005 but fired in 2008 after the city stopped work at the site on the grounds that Scarno had falsely claimed that the building was zoned to allow two additional stories.

The project remained in purgatory while residents mobilized. Eventually, they succeeded in having the area rezoned to thwart out-of-scale construction, and the city subsequently ruled that Fischman had not built enough of the building to be grandfathered in under the prior zoning.

Gravesend-based firm NSC Architecture will design the reimagined building.

Columnist gets bashed by teens

Is he a wimp or a hero — you decide!

The word "hero" is tossed around lightly these days, but this week, it's flying around our newsroom for all the right reasons.

Because I'm a genuine hero.

Now, most days, of course, I'm nothing of the sort, spending my time making calls, checking facts, gathering information — then mangling it, after deadline, into something vaguely resembling prose.

But on Monday night, my duties included staring into the maw of Hell — and not only coming back alive, but coming back with a story.

See **CAMPBELL** on page 9



By Andy Campbell



Senior reporter Andy Campbell was brutalized by teenagers on his way to a meeting. It's sad.

Search for Fort Greene rapist

By Natalie O'Neill
The Brooklyn Paper

The violent thug who tried to rape a young woman just feet from the Brooklyn Academy of Music in Fort Greene last week is a white man with chubby cheeks, sunken eyes and light hair, cops say.

Cops released a sketch this week of the alleged attacker, who is approximately 6-foot tall and between ages 30 and 35. The NYPD now wants neighbors' help in hunting the bad guy, who may be responsible for two attempted rapes in one week.

In the first incident, on Jan.

19, a 25-year-old woman was nearing the corner of St. Felix Street and Hanson Place at 1:30 a.m., when the suspect grabbed her from behind and tried to rip off her clothes.

She screamed, and the thug scampered away, leaving the woman physically unharmed.

Cops say the man was wearing a dark pea coat with a light-colored, button-down shirt.

Exactly one week later, at around 1:15 a.m. near the corner of Fulton and Cumberland streets, a man threw a woman against the fence and told her, "Don't fight it."



After a nearby witness yelled for help, the man ran away.

Anyone with information should call NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at (800) 577-8447 or visit www.nypdcrimestoppers.com. Police say that all calls are anonymous.

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Scary carjacking on Atlantic Ave.

88TH PRECINCT

Fort Greene-Clinton Hill
Two ballyhoo thieves kicked out a man in Fort Green Park on Jan. 25.

The 30-year-old victim told cops he was out for a stroll near Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park, just after 7 pm when a six men began to threaten him. One thug pushed him down a hill, started kicking him and demanded "everything he had." The jerks then snatched the park-goer's cell phone and left him with a gash above his eye.

Cops say one of the same men — a 25-year-old — attacked another victim in the park 10 minutes later. Police arrested him that night.

Target trouble

There were two more thefts at the Target in the troubled Atlantic Terminal Mall last week.

On Jan. 26, security guards told cops that a crook walked out of the store, which is on Atlantic Avenue near Flatbush Avenue, without paying for about \$1,700 of fancy electronics.

Four days later, a crook stole a pretty wallet from a

Park tumble

A thug of things roughed up a man in Fort Green Park on Jan. 25.

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POLICE BLOTTER

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shopper.

The 32-year-old victim told cops she put her wallet in the front pocket of her backpack at 2:30 pm. She soon noticed the pocket was unzipped and her purple, glittery wallet — which was filled with five credit cards — was missing.

Teen trash

Two teenage thugs attacked a man on S. Elliott Place on Jan. 27.

The 25-year-old victim told cops the violent jerks pushed him onto the sidewalk, near DeKalb Avenue, at 8 pm. Both ruffians punched him in the face and one smacked his empty messenger bag before running away.

Cops later arrested a 15-year-old and an 18-year-old.

iSnatch

A jerk swiped a fancy cell phone from a girl on Flatbush Avenue on Jan. 29.

The 23-year-old woman told cops she was texting while walking to the bus, near St. Johns Place, at 5:30 pm. The jerk then snatched her iPhone and ran away.

Bad dream

A quick-moving thief snatched a woman's bag of expensive stuff on the subway near Flatbush Avenue on Jan. 30.

The 28-year-old victim told cops she got on the train at around 1 am, then dozed off. When she woke up, near Fulton Street, she discovered her messenger bag, a laptop and cellphone were gone.

Natalie O'Neill

76TH PRECINCT

Carroll Gardens-Cobble Hill-Red Hook

Snaw jerks

Four creeps pelted a man with snow and ice and robbed him on Hoyt Street on Jan. 30.

The 40-year-old victim said he was near Butler Street at 2:40 am when he noticed the group, all clad in puffy winter coats, throwing snowballs. After the victim was nearly hit, one of the jerks said, "I don't give a f---," and then the entire mob proceeded to

hit him with blocks of ice and snow, punching him and kicking him in the face, and snatching his \$150 Gap coat and a set of keys for good measure.

Baltic bumper

Someone stole a fancy Lexus from Baltic Street overnight on Jan. 26.

The 57-year-old victim said she parked her 2009 sedan near Clinton Street at around 8:30 pm and returned at 7:30 the next morning to find it gone. Inside the car was a disability parking permit worth \$250, a pair of boots, and a \$1,000 motorized wheelchair.

Total burner

Someone stole a 2010 Toyota from Baltic Street on Jan. 26.

The 68-year-old victim said he parked his Sienna near Clinton Street at around 9:30 am and returned at 2 pm.

Robbed for \$2

A fearsome foursome robbed a man on Hoyt Street on Jan. 22.

The 43-year-old victim said he was near Douglas Street at 8:45 am when four men attacked him, hitting him in the eye and snatching his Playboy Bunny wallet, which contained \$2.

Gary Bulso

84TH PRECINCT

Brooklyn Heights-DUMBO-Boerum Hill-Downtown

Random stab

A ruffian with a knife was arrested after he stabbed a man on Lawrence Street on Jan. 25.

The victim told cops that the 19-year-old assailant randomly stabbed him near Willoughby Street at about 5 pm. Cops later caught up to the cretin, who tried to discard the knife before they nabbed him. The victim was taken to the hospital with minor injuries.

Fully baked

A thieving pothead was arrested for holding up a woman at knifepoint on Adams Street on Jan. 25.

The 50-year-old woman told cops that she was near

Red Cross Place at about 1:05 pm when the man held a knife to her face and demanded her jewelry. He took the gems along with her wallet and fled — but cops caught up to him — and the two blunts he had in his wallet.

Jewel heist

A jewel-hungry burglar stole \$20,000 worth of gems from a Livingston Street apartment on Jan. 25.

The victim told cops that he arrived home, between Court and Clinton streets, at about 1:30 pm to find the door pried open and his apartment ransacked. He soon realized that his cache of expensive watches, diamond necklaces, and bracelets were gone.

Shoe-!

A shoe-happy hooligan stole \$6,000 worth of sneakers and electronics from N.O.S. Shoes on Front Street on Jan. 26.

An employee arrived at the store, which is near Adams Street, at about 10:15 am to find the shop's glass facade busted and four pairs of expensive shoes, a laptop and

keyboards missing.

A scissor-wielding perp cut a Payless employee in the neck because he didn't like the price of shoes at the Fulton Street shop on Jan. 26.

The victim told cops that the jerk was arguing with him over the price of the sneakers at the store, which is near Lawrence Street, at about noon — that's when things got ugly. The thug pulled out a pair of scissors, the two scuffled and the victim got a slash to the neck. The perp fled the store with a pair of stolen shoes.

Laptop burglar

A thief stole a couple laptops from an unlocked Cranberry Street basement on Jan. 29.

The tenant, who lives between Columbia Heights and Willow Street, said that he heard noise coming from his basement — which he forgot to lock — at about 9:30 pm. When he went to check, he realized that his \$300 laptops were missing. The basement was still unlocked.

Andy Campbell

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Last Mass at Montserrat

Cops make big show of force at closure of controversial church

By Aaron Short

The Brooklyn Paper

The Brooklyn Diocese called in a strong show of police force on Sunday outside a beloved Bedford-Stuyvesant chapel that the church hierarchy closed in a controversial move.

Church officials apparently were worried about a large, and angry, crowd attending the last Mass at Our Lady of Montserrat, which the Diocese shuttered for good on Monday in what supporters say is payback for a pastor's opposition to the Diocese on several political issues.

The renegade priest, Father Jim O'Shea, was on hand for the

final rites at the Vernon Street church on Sunday, but parishioners were greeted by three squad cars from the nearby 90th Precinct stationhouse — cops who had been summoned by O'Shea's superior, Pastor William Chacon, and a representative of the Diocese, sources said.

One of the cops confirmed that a pastor from the church called and parishioners were overheard reprimanding Chacon for calling the police.

"It's a complete shame that instead of making an appearance and thanking the community, Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio sent the police in fear that peo-

ple would protest because they know the truth behind the closure is political," said parishioner Juan Ramos. "[Closing this church] is the ultimate way to stop the community from organizing itself."

In the past, DiMarzio has said that his decision to close the church last November was based solely on finances and the "long-term viability" of the Diocese itself.

With the closing of Montserrat, the Diocese now wants its parishioners to pray at All Saints Church on Throop Avenue, which is seven blocks away. DiMarzio did not comment on the show of

police strength, but the Diocese put out a statement on Monday that said it is "deeply aware of the sacrifice that these changes mean for those who worship in these churches."

"I pray that impacted parishes find comfort in the fact that we are creating a firm foundation for our Diocesan community... for many decades to come," Monsignor Edward Schermerberger, who was on the committee that recommended that the church be closed.

In a separate statement, a Diocese spokesman said that the show of police force was not meant as intimidation.

"Community affairs liaisons at the precinct were asked to be in attendance for public safety precautions, not to maintain order," said the spokesman, Shane Kavanagh.

That did not satisfy some Montserrat faithful, who remain convinced that the decision to close the church was based on O'Shea's outspoken politics. The father opposed a city plan to rezone the nearby Broadway Triangle and he opposed a state bill that could have prevented some expensive sex-abuse lawsuits against the Catholic Church. Both initiatives were pushed by Assemblyman Vito Lopez (D-Bushwick), a



Rev. Jim O'Shea, has said his last Mass at Our Lady of Montserrat Church, which has been closed.

DiMarzio ally, though DiMarzio has denied that the closure of the church had anything to do with O'Shea's outspokenness.

Rather, the Diocese says that Montserrat has accrued a debt of \$395,000 since 2000 and church documents show a deficit of \$23,171 in 2010 — though that figure includes inflated utility bills and expenses, such as a secretary's salary, that does not exist.

Parishioners, many of whom came from other parts of Brooklyn and Queens to visit the church they were baptized and took communion with, mourned the loss of their congregation Sunday with a mix of sadness and resignation.

The building, according to a Diocese spokesman, will be "desacralized" and put on the market in the spring.

"Whatever money gained by the sale of that property is gained in sale by the parish," said church spokesman Shane Kavanagh. "The plan is to sell it." O'Shea's future is also unclear.

Foolish man, never ask to see the gun!

90TH PRECINCT

Southside-Bushwick

Two perps robbed a man on Bedford Avenue on Jan.

29, punching him in the face after he foolishly demanded to see their gun.

The man told cops that he was near S. First Street

at 5 am when one thug approached and said, "Give me your money."

When the victim stupidly responded, "Show me your

gun," the thug punched him in the face, knocking him to the ground.

The perps fled and the victim was taken to the hospital with a broken cheekbone and a concussion.

Club hit

A thug struck a man outside a club on Havemeyer Street on Jan. 23, which led to a fight on the corner.

The perp approached the victim near S. Fifth Street at 3:30 am and punched him in the face. He called for reinforcements and the fight escalated — until another perp ran over to the victim, taking his watch and gold chain, and ran away.

Lots of burgs

There were at least four burglaries reported last week:

• A perp stole two laptops from two apartments in the

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same building on Montrose Avenue near Graham Avenue on Jan. 29 at 6 pm, while the tenant stepped out for two hours.

• A tenant left her Broadway apartment on Jan. 28 at 8:30 am to visit a friend, but returned at 3 pm the next day to find that her laptop, camera and jewelry had been stolen from the apartment near Hooper Street.

• A tenant left her S. Fifth Street apartment on Jan. 26 at 12:30 am, and returned at

Wythe Avenue between Jan. 26 and 28. The owner returned to find that the thief had taken religious articles, his iPod, and his camera.

• A Toyota that had been parked on Boerum Street at 2:30 pm on Jan. 29 was gone when its owner returned to the block between Manhattan Avenue and Leonard Street at 10:30 pm.

• A thief nabbed a Nissan from Johnson Avenue near Graham Avenue between 3:40 and 4 pm on Jan. 28.

• A woman parked her car in front of her home on Manhattan Avenue near Moore Street at 7:30 pm on Jan. 26, but noticed that it was missing four hours later.

• A thief broke into a Toyota from S. Ninth Street near

— Aaron Short

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By Andy Campbell

The Brooklyn Paper

The city finally committed cash to prop up long-ailing East River ferry service on Wednesday, ending years of financial struggle among independent ferry operators — but whether commuters will actually utilize the new service is still up in the air.

The Economic Development Corporation has sealed a three-year, \$9-million contract with a division of New York Waterway to run all-day service along seven regular stops on the East River starting in June.

"Using the waterway to connect New Yorkers to business districts as well as recreation destinations will encourage economic activity and growth on both sides of the East River," said EDC President Seth Pinsky.

"This robust, regular service will be well-integrated with existing transportation options."

If the program kicks off smoothly, ferries would run every 20 minutes starting at E. 34th Street in Manhattan, to Long Island City, and then to Greenpoint, Williamsburg and DUMBO all the way down to Wall Street. In the summer, additional stops would be made at Pier 6 at Atlantic Avenue and Gov-

ernor's Island on Fridays. Fares will range from \$3 for up to three stops, to \$5.50 for more than three stops.

There are bound to be problems as the program gets underway. The city's commitment to New York Waterway may push out the New York Water Taxi — which won't get any of the city cash. Water Taxi spokesman Tom Fox couldn't be reached by press time.

It's yet unclear whether people will use the service, too. The current ferry schedule is inconsistent and underutilized. But city officials hope that the new program will be reliable — and cheap — enough to lure commuters.

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Another burger bash in the Park Slope

78TH PRECINCT

Park Slope

A trio of thugs slugged a deliveryman on St. Johns Place on Jan. 24, getting away with his food.

The restaurant worker told cops that he was between Sixth and Seventh avenues at about 6:30 pm when the posse attacked him from behind.

"Give me the money," one of the thugs said, as one or more of the hooligans punctuated the demand with fists.

All they got was the food, estimated at \$18.

Wheel bad

At least five cars were sto-

len or burglarized last week. Here's the bad news:

• A thief swiped an 11-year-old Honda from Eighth Avenue between Jan. 22 and 26. The victim said he had parked near Eighth Street.

• American Apparel had one of its fifty compact SUVs stolen off Eighth Avenue near the Flatbush Avenue store on Jan. 26. A worker told cops that he'd parked it at 1 pm, but it was gone four hours later.

• A thief tried to break into a 1996 Dodge that had been left on Fifth Avenue near Eighth Street on Jan. 21, but he did not get in. The

POLICE BLOTTER

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owner discovered damage to the car on Jan. 26.

• A 1999 Dodge was swiped off 10th Street over- between Fifth and Sixth avenues at 11 pm on Jan. 21, but when he returned three days later, he discovered that his fancy option — valued at \$1,600 — had been swiped.

— Gersh Kuntzman

77TH PRECINCT

Prospect Heights

Sinister smash

A thug bashed in the rear window of a brand new 2011 Audi parked on Eastern Parkway on Jan. 28, but took nothing.

The owner told police that he parked his red luxury vehicle between Plaza Street East and Underhill Avenue at 10 pm. When he returned a short time later, its window was caved in.

The incident was hauntingly similar to a smashing spree against SUVs and luxury cars parked around Prospect Park last November.

Half baked

A 50-year-old man caught smoking marijuana on Lincoln Place tried to avoid an arrest by swallowing his blunt on Jan. 29 — but he ended up in handcuffs anyway after he bragged about what he had done.

Cops were patrolling between Washington and Classon avenues at 1:15 pm when they saw the pothead puffing away.

76TH PRECINCT

Carroll Gardens-Cobble Hill-Red Hook

Snow jerks

Four creeps pelted a man

Thief on bike strikes again

By Gersh Kuntzman

The Brooklyn Paper

The teenager who has stalked iPhone users in Park Slope for two years continued his reign of terror last week, swiping another of the fancy smartphones from a woman on Flatbush Avenue.

The victim told cops the same story that more than a dozen victims have told since the robbery spree began. She was chatting on her iPhone near the corner of Plaza Street West at around 7:25 pm on Jan. 25 when a teenager approached from behind on a bicycle.

He glided silently towards her, grab-

bled the phone just as he passed her on the dark-colored mini-sized bike. Without missing a beat, he continued on towards St. Johns Place.

If that location sounds familiar to iPhone users, it should: the Jobophone, robbing thief has been plying his pernicious trade in the area for two years. For a brief time this fall, cops thought they had collared him, but he returned in December.

A crime prevention officer in the precinct cautioned all iPhone users to "know where you are at all times and don't just pull out the phone and start typing."

door.

"Stay, stay," one of them ordered, but she jumped out of the car, which was parked near S. Oxford Street.

That's when the thugs drove off with her ride, her cellphone and \$60.

Target trouble

There were two more thefts at the Target in the troubled Atlantic Terminal Mall last week:

• On Jan. 26, security guards told cops that a crook walked out of the store, which is on Atlantic Avenue near Flatbush Avenue, without paying for about \$1,700 of fancy electronics.

• Four days later, a crook stole a pretty wallet from a shopper.

The 32-year-old victim told cops she put her wallet in the front pocket of her backpack at 2:30 pm. She soon noticed the pocket was unzipped and her purple, glittery wallet — which was filled with five credit cards — was missing.

— Natalie O'Neill

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Baltic bum
Someone stole a fancy Lexus from Baltic Street overnight on Jan. 26.

The 57-year-old victim said she parked her 2009 sedan near Clinton Street at around 8:30 pm and returned at 7:30 the next morning to find it gone.

Inside the car was a disability parking permit worth \$250, a pair of boots, and a \$1,000 motorized wheelchair.

Total bum
Someone stole a 2010 Toyota from Baltic Street on Jan. 26.

The 68-year-old victim said he parked his Siena near Clinton Street at around 9:30 am and returned at 2 pm.

Robbed for \$2
A fearsome foursome robbed a man on Hoyt Street on Jan. 22.

The 43-year-old victim said he was near Douglas Street at 4:45 am when four men attacked him, hitting him in the eye and snatching his Playboy Bunny wallet, which contained \$2.

— Gary Bulso

88TH PRECINCT

Fort Greene-Clinton Hill

Car crooks

Two bally thieves kicked a woman out of her car, then stole it on Atlantic Avenue on Jan. 24.

The 51-year-old lady told cops she was sitting in a green Saab at 11 pm when two masked men opened the

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Ridge leaders do what they do — lead

By Helen Klein
The Brooklyn Paper

Bay Ridge activists gathered together to celebrate their achievements last Saturday at an annual event whose guest list reads like a "Who's Who" of the neighborhood.

About 150 community luminaries braved what was left of Thursday's snow to attend the Bay Ridge Community Council's Presidents' Luncheon and toast each other, looking back at previous successes and ahead to upcoming endeavors.

"It's about the present, the past and hopefully the future," said Arlene Keating, the organization's executive secretary to the crowd at the Bay Ridge Manor, on 76th Street near Fifth Avenue.

The Council's efforts are key to ensuring a bright future for Brooklyn neighborhoods such as Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights and Fort Hamilton, said Sen. Charles Schumer (D-New York).

"Bay Ridge is a great neighborhood," he said. "We have got to keep it strong and we have got to serve it and



(At left) Colleen Golden, state Sen. Marty Golden (R-Bay Ridge) and Conservative Party Chairman Mike Long shared a laugh before lunch at the Bay Ridge Manor. (At right) Peter Killen and Ralph Peretto chatted.

your civic association does an amazing job."

From across the aisle, Rep. Michael Grimm (R-Bay Ridge) also sang the community's praises.

"When I think of the sacrifices made by the people in this room every day, every week, that's remarkable," he said. "This is one of the most sought-after communities, not just because houses maintain their values, not just because of the brownstones,

but because of you."

The "you," in this case, are the presidents and delegates of about 100 community groups, including civic associations, PTAs, block associations, church groups, and a laundry list of other organizations such as the Bay

Ridge Rod and Gun Club, the Bay Ridge Lions Club, and the Bay Ridge Historical Society whose membership in the community council fulfills the vision of Walter and Vincent Kassenbrock, who came up with the idea of an umbrella organization to serve the neighborhood 60 years ago.

"Without its membership, the council wouldn't exist," said Alex Conti, who is serving as the group's president for the second time.

A former council president added his own tip-hat hooray for the organization.

"Three cheers for the Bay Ridge Community Council," said Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge), who cut his teeth in community service with the Bay Ridge Community Council, and took the group's helm before running for office.

Road rage assault on 73rd

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68TH PRECINCT

Bay Ridge-Dyker Heights

A hot-headed motorist and his goons attacked another driver during a road rage incident at 73rd Street on Jan. 23.

The victim told cops that he was driving between Seventh Avenue and Fort Hamilton Parkway at around 8:30 pm when he saw a double-parked car. The victim thought he couldn't get around the other vehicle, so he honked his horn. Then some unknown dude near the double-parked car smashed the victim's car. Once the victim got out to confront the smacker, he was jumped by a few dudes, who broke his jaw during the beat-down.

Car break-in

Someone stole cards, gloves and laptop from a car parked on Ridge Boulevard near 82nd Street on Jan. 25. The victim told cops that he parked his ride at 2 am and returned eight hours later to find that his stuff was gone.

Jackpot jack

An ice-cold thief mugged a 12-year-old kid for his jacket on Fourth Avenue on Jan. 24. The pre-teen victim told cops that he was near 72nd Street at around 6 pm when a young thug approached him

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from behind, yelling, "Give me your jacket."

The perp then pushed the kid, kicked him in the stomach and yanked off his Gap coat.

Double threat

Two weapon-wielding thugs mugged a guy in a Fifth Avenue lobby on Jan. 24. The victim told cops that

he was entering his building, which is between 81st and 82nd streets, at around 10:30 pm. He saw one of the perps outside the door and an accomplice waiting in the lobby. The lobby-dwelling perp then pulled the victim inside, threw him against the wall and threatened him with a large kitchen knife. The other thug walked in the building, took out his gun and

pressed it to the victim's temple. He demanded money, so the victim gave him \$80. Finally, the two robbers fled.

Unlucky no.s

Someone stole lottery tickets and several pieces of pricey jewelry—including a \$4,000 diamond engagement ring—from a Bay Ridge Avenue apartment on Jan. 28.

The formerly blinging victim told cops that he left his home, which is between Narrows Avenue and Colonial Road, at around 6:30 am and returned 12 hours later to find his front door broken and his accessories gone.

—Alex Rush

Thief on bike at it again

By Gersh Kuntzman

The Brooklyn Paper

The teenager who has stalked iPhone users in Park Slope for two years continued his reign of terror last week, swiping another of the fancy smartphones from a woman on Flatbush Avenue.

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Bed & 'Board'

Community group website pitches sex toy party, some not amused

By Laura Gottesdiener
The Brooklyn Paper

Move over, Craigslist! Community Board 1's bulletin board is now the hottest place to advertise sex parties — but some members are all hot and bothered about it.

Last weekend, community member Susana Ramos used the community group's unofficial Yahoo club page to post multiple invitations to a ladies-only "Passion Party"

on Feb. 5, sparking outrage in some (and curiosity in others). "I don't think [it's] appropriate for this listserve," wrote board member Karen Nieves.

Nieves's problem isn't sex or the Passion Parties, which are akin to a Tupperware party for sex toys. She just doesn't want to see sex solicitations every time she logs onto a Yahoo page that was started by a board member for non-official CBI

postings. Ramos, who is a former member of the 90th Precinct Community Council, didn't take Nieves's criticism lightly.

"I am not charging! I am not selling!!!!" Ramos wrote in a reply post. Instead, Ramos said that all she wanted to do is ease her neighbors' pain in these stressful times.

"If anyone who reads this is not secure with their sexuality and don't want to



learn more on how to better your sex life in these times of war and economic problems, that is your business," Ramos posted.

But others saw a profit behind this professed generosity. "I suspect the real issue at hand is using this forum of a means of free advertising," said Heather Letzku, a local blogger.

And some were even wary of what was being sold. "It looked like a scam from a Nigerian bank," said Teresa Toro, the listserve's moderator who did not to censor the post, preferring to keep her eyes wide shut to this particular controversy.

Only members can post on the CBI club page, and the moderator must approve all members, limitations that Toro hopes will prevent her from having to play an active role in curbing debate or discussion.

"Am I going to censor a Yahoo group? No, I really don't want to do that," said Toro.

But without an active moderator, scams and other types of risky business might become more common. "Pretty much every popular forum gets attacked by spammers," said Richard Millington, an online community consultant whose clients include top-shelf names such as the United Nations.

"If the community is properly managed, this shouldn't be a problem," he added.

Even smaller, private online communities like a neighborhood parenting forum can quickly become R-rated.

"I had some one post that they were looking for another couple for 'soft swinging,'" said Susan Fox, the creator of the website Park Slope Parents.

"And that wasn't the most inappropriate thing... I had to start moderating because people were getting really nasty," Fox said.

It's unclear whether the CBI group page will ever deal with postings more sensational than the pre-Valentine's Day Passion Party come on from Ramos, who, like others who throw such events, is an "independent Passion Consultant" who gets commissions from any sex toy sales.

Of course, public scandal is the best aphrodisiac — just ask Mark Sanford — and the Passion Party is still scheduled for Saturday.

On the agenda for the evening, after the cursory discussion of the Broadway Triangle rezoning, partygoers will attempt to map the dark continent of female sexuality (no word yet on whether Jack Hammer, Brooklyn director for the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, will swing by).

As for other prospective guests, free-speech champion Toro said she probably won't make it.

"I'm not in the market for sex toys at the moment," she said. CBI Passion Party (366 Hewes St. between Third and Fourth streets in Williamsburg, no phone), Feb. 5, 6 p.m. RSVP to mysr00@yahoo.com.

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STOOP...

Continued from page 1

Levin (D-Greenpoint) is unusual and "totally crazy." "I've never heard of anything like this before," said Levin. "Some of these families have been living there for generations. Clearly something is amiss."

Levin and Assemblyman Joe Lentol (D-Greenpoint) were set to host a town hall meeting with several city

agencies on Wednesday in hopes of getting some answers for homeowners. "No one forewarned them about this problem," said Lentol. "The city should have organized prior to the sending of these letters."

A Design Department spokesman declined to comment, saying the agency would respond at the public meeting.

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MONTHLY HEALTH TIPS

from New York Methodist Hospital

Peripheral Arterial Disease: More Than Just a Pain in the Leg

By Terrence Sacchi, M.D., Chief of Cardiology, New York Methodist Hospital

Peripheral arterial disease (PAD) is a form of arteriosclerosis — a thickening or hardening of arterial walls, interfering with blood circulation — that affects the arteries of the legs, thighs and pelvis. As these arteries narrow or become blocked, the lack of blood causes pain in the muscles. If left untreated, PAD can lead to serious problems, including skin ulcers and, in some cases, gangrene.

The symptoms that indicate PAD are frequently overlooked or ignored. They include muscle pain and cramping or tiredness in the calf or leg when walking. Many people with PAD assume that the pain is being caused by arthritis, a pulled muscle or even old age because it subsides when they stop walking.

Peripheral arterial disease may affect as many as 8 million Americans. Because it has mild or no symptoms, except in later stages, it is important to see a doctor for a proper diagnosis. When diagnosing PAD, a physician will take several factors into account, including a decreased or absent pulse in one leg or lower systolic blood pressure measurements taken at the ankle, when compared with those taken above the heart. In more severe cases, skin discoloration may be present and, eventually ulcers form on the leg, foot and toes, due to a lack of blood flow.

The risk factors for developing PAD are similar to those for developing heart disease: high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, smoking and diabetes. Clogged arteries in the legs often signal narrowed arteries elsewhere in the body. It is not surprising that one half of patients with peripheral artery disease also have symptomatic heart disease.

The most effective treatment for PAD is regular physical activity. Following a program consisting of a 30 to 45 minute walk each day, five times each week, will result in improvement in 80 percent of cases in a three month period. Exercise and a healthy diet are also helpful, and smokers with PAD must quit as they have a much higher incidence of gangrene leading to amputation. Most patients are also given antiplatelet or blood-thinning drugs to reduce the risk of stroke or heart attack.

For more severe cases, drugs are available for treatment. Several drugs claim to allow patients with PAD to walk greater distances without pain. They are able to increase blood flow through the arteries, prevent platelets from coagulating and utilize enzymes more efficiently.

Angioplasty and bypass surgery are also treatment options. Balloon angioplasty is successful only when treating the larger arteries of the leg. The balloon is inserted into the artery via a long catheter and then inflated, dilating the artery and increasing blood flow. Bypass surgery is similar to a coronary artery bypass procedure, which is performed on the arteries of the heart. A clogged section of leg artery can be bypassed with a piece of vein to redirect blood flow around the blockage.

Peripheral artery disease is a treatable condition but it is important to listen to what your body is trying to tell you. If you suffer from pain in your legs, see a doctor. Too many people are missing a diagnosis that is possible to rectify when caught in time.

Brooklynite Ken Adams — to run state economic agency

By Gary Bulso

The Brooklyn Paper

The state agency behind the controversial Atlantic Yards mega-project and the Brooklyn Bridge Park waterfront development now has a Brooklynite at the helm.

On Wednesday, Gov. Cuomo tapped former Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce President Kenneth Adams — a Cobble Hill native — to run the Empire State Development Agency, the state's quasi-independent economic engine.

Adams is currently the head of the Business Council of New York State, a 2,500-member pro-business lobbying group that pushes for less regulation and lower taxes. In his four years at the helm, the council became more politically active, making the first endorsement in its history last fall — Andrew Cuomo for governor.

This week, Cuomo returned the kind words, calling Adams the "right person at the right time" to "change the state's business climate to attract and maintain cutting-edge companies."

Carl Ham, Adams's successor at the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, cheered the news as good for Brooklyn.

"The perfect candidate for the job has an understanding of upstate and downstate



Way back in 1996, Ken Adams visited our newsroom in a run for office.

issues, and he understands both," Ham said.

Those who remember Adams, whether as a teenager in Cobble Hill or during his successful tenure at the Chamber of Commerce from 1996-2005, were awash with pride.

"He's been a dedicated public servant his entire life," said Roy Sloane, the president of the Cobble Hill Association, a civic group Adams once helmed.

Adams's reputation as a bridge-builder could help put a positive face on the Empire State Development Corporation, which has drawn fire for rubber-stamping the Atlantic Yards project, and

for approving housing inside Brooklyn Bridge Park.

The agency finances and operates state projects by issuing tax-exempt bonds — and often avoids the city's usual public review process for its projects.

"The Empire State Development Corporation was used in Brooklyn Bridge Park and the Atlantic Yards to skirt all public scrutiny and evade community input," Sloane charged.

But that doesn't mean he's not willing to give Adams — a Brooklyn Friends graduate, after all — a chance.

"Do I have issues with the Empire State development Corporation? Yes. Do I have issues with Ken Adams? No," he stated.

Atlantic Yards opponents are cautiously optimistic. "For those of us with huge concerns about Atlantic Yards, I would hope Ken brings a new era of transparency and the seeking of community input on projects the development corporation has in its portfolio," said Eric McClure, campaign coordinator of Park Slope Neighbors, a grassroots group.

The appointment is part of a decision to cleave the functions of the CEO and the chairman, posts previously held by Dennis Mullen, the former Birds Eye Food CEO, whom Adams succeeded.

Adams will oversee Cuomo's plan to create 10 regional councils that will constitute the newly organized agency.

The agency's mission is to drive job growth and strategic investment through an array of programs, including a \$50-million small business loan fund and a \$250-million jobs program. It also offers financial incentives to companies to set up shop in the state.

Adams's responsibilities are statewide, but local officials are already calling for him to focus on Brooklyn.

"I'm confident that Ken will address the high rate of unemployment in Central Brooklyn, the lack of procurement for minority and women owned businesses in the state of New York, as well as the impact of the recession on all small businesses," said Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Fort Greene).

"These are austere times, and the question is, can he be all things to all people in Brooklyn?" she asked.

Adams did not return a request for comment in time for our online deadline.

TENNIS...

Continued from page 1

"This will absolutely exclude people who can't afford to pay the fees," said Paul Campbell, the director of the indoor tennis center, which is operated by the Prospect Park Alliance and is not taking its hourly \$34-\$54 fees during the indoor season.

It is not just tennis players that are being pinched. The proposal also calls for:

- Fees at recreation centers to jump from \$75 to \$150 a year at facilities with indoor pools; from \$50 to \$100 at centers without a pool; and from \$10 to \$25 for seniors.

- Baseball field fees, whose rates vary, will increase by 60 percent.
- Basketball court fees will increase from about \$5 an hour to \$8.

In total, the hikes could generate up to \$4 million a year. Last year, tennis fees, last raised in 2003, brought \$1.8 million to city coffers, Parks said.

The city said it put out notice of the increase a month ago, and would be reviewing the comments made at a single, unpublicized public hearing held last Tuesday on the far west side of Manhattan.

But critics said the notice was about as loud as the crowd during a match point at Wimbledon.

"We got no warning," said Windsor Terrace resident Amelia Costigan, who moderates a news group called Kensington/Windsor Terrace Neighbors. "This is a regressive tax on the middle class and working people."

If approved, tennis fees would increase in April, membership fees would increase July 1, and field use fees no earlier than fall 2011.

Tennis advocates said they are facing disproportionately higher costs per hour than other sports, noting that with team sports, the cost is less since more players share the cost.

"Someone in city government has decided that rich people are playing tennis, so we'll just charge them way more," said Sean Hoess, who runs a tennis group in McCa-reen Park, where courts were renovated then themselves last year. "The city is gouging us."

Not so, claims Parks. "Ballfield users actually pay far more than tennis users over the course of the year," according to Parks spokesman Phil Abramson, who said baseball and softball leagues pay by the hour and shell out "tens of thousands of dollars" over the course of the year, which is a third of the tennis season, which runs from April to November.

"There is no comparable tennis permit for ballfields," he said.

And regarding the conditions of Brooklyn tennis courts, Parks spokeswoman Vickie Karp added, "We do our best to maintain them in and keep them in shape at all times. We are always open to hearing from anyone through 311 about a condition we may not already be addressing."

RESTLER...

Continued from page 1

ing picture would make him look like the president, and Michelle and Barack Obama appear to be visiting him.

"The president and First Lady smiled as I respectfully told them, 'You have inspired us to build a progressive Brooklyn Democratic Party and to dismantle the Brooklyn Machine once and for all!'" he said.

Restler also described the cherry cobbler as "ridiculous" (well, if you're not going to get good cobbler at the

White House, where are you going to get it?).

Before they returned for Brooklyn, Baker took multiple pictures of Restler next to Abraham Lincoln memorabilia in the White House's East Room.

"We wanted pictures because his name is Lincoln," said Baker. "But I don't think Lincoln has presidential ambitions."

But he might want to save those pictures in case he does. Just like Bill Clinton did.

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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

February 4-10 2011

Love stinks!

A Valentine's Day guide for people who hate Valentine's Day

By Michelle Manetti
for The Brooklyn Paper

Whoever said that one is the loneliest number obviously never celebrated Valentine's Day in Brooklyn. This year, there are plenty of quirky events honoring the singles, cynics, drinkers and the recently dumped — so you can go out with confidence in your singleness this Feb. 14. And who knows, maybe you'll find someone to go home with, too.

For cynical singles

When the people behind "The Love Show" say "Go F---k Yourself," they mean that in the best way possible. The dance cabaret, which brings comedy, dancing and burlesque to Public Assembly on Feb. 7, is just an early reminder that being single means not having to feel guilty about drinking excessively while watching sexy men and women strut their stuff. "It's going to be a rowdy, fun and charming good time," said Love Show organizer Rachel Ma. "We'll be doing different types of comical dance numbers about all different types of love."

Single but not completely cynical yet? Then head to the Black Rabbit in Greenpoint this Valentine's Day for its "Smiths Speed Dating," where the first 20 guys and gals to sign-up will get a chance to meet their potential love.

"Our Valentine's Day is hip," said bartender Dennis Delany. "Can you imagine speed-dating while listening to the most depressing music of The Smiths? It's really fun and ironic."

The Love Show's "Go F---k Yourself" at Public Assembly (70 N. Sixth St. between Wythe and Kent avenues in Williamsburg, (718) 384-4586), Feb. 7 at 9 p.m. Tickets \$10. For info, visit www.loveinbrooklyn.com.



Red menace: Valentine's Day doesn't have to be just for couples. On Feb. 7, the Love Show presents a pre-Valentine's Day cabaret called "Go F--- Yourself," featuring dance, burlesque, song, comedy magic, and the message to, above all else, love yourself. How nice.

publicassemblynyc.com; "Smiths Speed Dating" at Black Rabbit (91 Greenpoint Ave. between Manhattan Avenue and Franklin Street in Greenpoint, (718) 349-1595), Feb. 14 at 8 p.m. For info, visit www.blackrabbitbar.com.

For the recently rejected

So you've been spurned. Laugh at others who have been rejected worse than you at the Bell House this Valentine's day with the "Rejection Show," featuring writers, comedians, cartoonists and artists who will share their failures in business and love all to make you feel better about yourself.

"It's a supportive show," said host Jon Friedman. "It's a laid-back party atmosphere, plus there is live music, we have a lot of fun."

Indeed, afterwards, The Defibrillators will rock out love songs from the 1980s.

"Rejection Show" at The Bell House (149 Seventh Street and Third Avenue in Gowanus, (718) 643-6510), Feb. 14 at 7 p.m. Tickets \$10 in advance, \$12 at door. For info, visit www.thebellhouse.com.

For the recently dumped

If after a bad breakup, all you feel like doing is singing Meat Loaf's "I Do Any-

thing For Love," you'll find yourself in good company at Union Hall this Valentine's Day for "Love Bites: The Power Ballads Sing-along."

It will be a night of belting out your heart-ache to hits from the 1980s and '90s, including songs from Journey, Bryan Adams, Poison, Aerosmith and Seal. There will also be a contest for the worst breakup story, so you may actually end up feeling like a winner.

And if you're recently dumped, it's time to start thinking about your needs. So treat yourself to the "Steamy Valentine Night" party at Brooklyn Bayna, where you can enjoy steam rooms, Jacuzzi and a cold plunge pool all designed to ease your pain. There is also a pool-side dance floor, hookah lounge, and rooftop smoking deck. "This is a fantastic place to go on Valentine's Day that isn't depressing and is just fun," said Larisa Fuchs of Gemini and Scorpio, the event's organizer. "It's so comfortable for singles and everyone is exceptionally friendly."

The best part may be an hour open vodka bar, free pierogi and a performance by The Hungry March Band. Because nothing fills the spirits quite like a street brass marching band playing "Push It."

"Love Bites: The Power Ballads Sing-along" at Union Hall (702 Union St. near Fifth Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 638-4400), Feb. 14 at 10 p.m. Tickets \$5. For info, visit www.unionhall.com; Steamy Valentine's Night at Brooklyn Bayna (602 Coney Island Ave. between Beverley Road and Avenue C in Kensington, (718) 853-1300), Feb. 14 at 7 p.m. Tickets \$45. For info, visit www.geminianscorpio.com.

bouche; a cocktail to share with two straws; a choice of smoked catfish nam prik with vegetables or thinly sliced smoked pork loin with a herb salad; the "Cue Surf and Turf" for two, which includes smoked prime rib and smoked chili lobster; and a fresh pie for dessert that features the famed Fatty Bar, a hand-made chocolate bar that comes in either the slightly spicy or crunchy version. Now, just remember to share.

Fatty "Cue" (91 S. Sixth St. between Bedford Avenue and Berry Street in Williamsburg, (718) 599-3090), \$69 for two.

Marco Polo

If you want to spend the weekend in Venice without the airfare, head to Marco Polo Ristorante in Carroll Gardens for an old-school Italian dining experience.

From Feb. 12 to 14, staff will dress up as gondoliers during your candle-lit meal. The special menu features a variety of antipasta, salad, risotto, and entrees ranging from \$9.95 to \$18.95, including a risotto with shrimp and a homemade ravioli stuffed with veal and spinach that will rival anything you've had in the mother country.

Marco Polo Ristorante (345 Court St. between Court and Union streets in Carroll Gardens, (718) 852-5015) — with Vera Zukeleman



A couple of spoons: Samantha Katz and Samuel Cantor share some soup at Melt in Park Slope, which will be jumping on Valentine's Day.

Love bites

By Meredith Deliso
The Brooklyn Paper

If you want to do it right, we've got you covered for where to head this Feb. 14 to impress your better half.

Melt

This dating destination is a natural choice for a romantic meal for two in general, making it an obvious choice this Valentine's Day.

"We have a bit of a reputation as a date place," said Joshua Gibson, manager for the Park Slope restaurant. "Our decor is sleek and modern, and there's nice, dim, romantic lighting."

As for food, chef Maguette Sima Sife has fittingly prepared a four-course prix fixe featuring a variety of natural aphrodisiacs, including bacon-wrapped scallops for an appetizer, lobster bisque for the second course, and seared salmon for the main course. Pair each course with wine for extra, and you'll be all set.

Melt (440 Bergen St. near Fifth Avenue in

Park Slope, (718) 230-5925), seatings from 5:30-10 p.m. on Feb. 14, \$50 prix fixe.

Char No. 4

There's something special in the water at this Cobble Hill whiskey bar and restaurant.

"Many people have had successful first dates here, and have even gone on to be married. There's obviously something magical happening here that makes love connections," said Char No. 4 co-owner Sean Josephs.

Maybe it's just the whiskey. In any event, this Valentine's Day feast on the restaurant's special menu, featuring all new bourbon and whiskey-infused dishes, including a smoked beef cheek tortellini for an appetizer, a maple glazed duck breast for an entrée, and a spiced pear cake for dessert, among other options. For an additional \$25, add a whiskey pairing to your meal, and maybe that magic will happen.

Char No. 4 (196 Smith St. between Warren and Baltic streets in Cobble Hill, (718) 643-2106), Valentine's Day menu \$60.

Fatty Cue

It's all about sharing this Valentine's Day at Fatty Cue, as the Williamsburg restaurant's \$69 special menu meant for two.

The three-course special includes an amuse

CINEMA

Love Susan

Thanks to Susan Sarandon, there are many great, iconic moments in the film lexicon: her sporting vintage sunglasses behind the wheel of that fabled blue Thunderbird convertible in "Thelma and Louise," her memorable speech about the "church of baseball" in "Bull Durham," even her half-naked singing in "The Rocky Horror Picture Show."

This month, the Brooklyn Academy of Music attempts to encapsulate a varied career that's spanned musicals, comedy, drama, suspense, and more drama, with a 13-film retrospective from Feb. 10 to 13.

"Susan is such a great actress, she's so appealing and has so much depth, and her career is so multifaceted," said BAM president Karen Brooks Hopkins.

Indeed, the films present a mix of some of her best-known works, such as "Dead Man Walking" (for which she won the Academy Award), plus lesser-known pieces such as "Twilight" (not the vampire movie). Even films that missed the mark, including "The Hunger" and "Rocky Horror Picture Show," will make an appearance.

Imagine that, "Rocky Horror" at BAM. "The Susan Sarandon Picture Show" at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100), Feb. 10-13 with a Q&A with Sarandon on Feb. 13. Tickets \$7-\$15. For info, visit www.bam.org. — Meredith Deliso

THEATER

Ball girls

Are you ready for some gender politics? A new play from Williamsburg's Half Straddle Theater Company celebrates high school football, except that the players who punt, pass and kick just happen to be girls.

Playwright Tina Satter got "obsessed" with "Friday Night Lights" and was inspired to write "In the Pony Palace Football," beginning at the Bushwick Starr on Feb. 8.

On one level, it's about shyly subverting gender norms by reclaiming the most American — and masculine — of sports. But it's also about team spirit, camaraderie and the teenage politics of high school.

"It's almost a weird idealization, like, let's not even deal with boys," said Satter. "It's just girls and they get to rule."

"In the Pony Palace Football" at the Bushwick Starr (207 Starr St. between Irving and Wyckoff avenues in Bushwick, no phone), Feb. 8-26. Tickets \$16. For info, visit www.thebushwickstarr.org. — Meredith Deliso

THEATER

Crook win

The Heights Players' upcoming rendition of "Frost/Nixon" reminds us how lame modern TV interviews are compared to the 1977 face-off between the disgraced former president and the enterprising British talk-show host.

Where Matt Lauer's sit-down with George Bush revealed only that W. was offended that Kanye West once called him a racist, Frost's "Frost/Nixon" revealed major insights into Watergate and the former president's personality.

The play, which was a Broadway hit in 2007 and then an Oscar-nominated film, mixes the historical account of the interview, with fictional scenes.

One of the reasons that The Heights Players narrative works so well is Jason Hewitt, the actor playing Nixon. Like Frank Langella in previous versions, Hewitt doesn't attempt a dead-on impression of the paranoid prez, but still manages to channel his brash personality.

"His facial features and expression even resemble Nixon's," said director Steve Velardi. "Frost/Nixon" at the Heights Players (26 Willow Pl. between State and Joralemon streets in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 237-2752), Feb. 4-20. Performances are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets \$15. For info, visit www.heightsplayers.org. — Alex Rush

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EDITORS' PICKS

SATURDAY February 5	SUNDAY February 6	MONDAY February 8	THURSDAY February 10	FRIDAY February 11
On Bayway The Regina Opera Company trades Wagner for Webber at its regular "Salute to Broadway" concert featuring two dozen selections of Broadway and popular tunes from classics as "Showboat," "South Pacific," "My Fair Lady," "West Side Story," and contemporary shows like "Les Miserables," "Jekyll and Hyde," and "Evita." 3 pm. "Salute to Broadway" at Regina Hall (1210 65th St. at 12th Avenue in Bay Ridge, (718) 259-2722). Tickets are \$12-\$85 for teens, free for children. For info, visit www.reginaopera.org/	Hank talk Hank Willis Thomas is prepared for some candid talk during the "Black History Month" program at the Brooklyn Museum. Thomas's exhibit, "Unbranded," features advertisements from 1968 to 2008 — and a frank chat about how blacks have been portrayed in the media. Alcohol and jazz will be available to take the edge off. 5 pm. Celebrating Black History Month at the Brooklyn Museum (200 Eastern Parkway, at Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights, (718) 638-5000). Free. For info, visit www.brooklynmuseum.org.	Dead head ...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead want to make your Monday a little more scary with a release party for its seventh album, "Tao of Dead." The show at Littlefield will make you feel like you've just entered the kingdom of Hell — which is just how Conrad Keely likes it. 8:30 pm. "And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead" at Littlefield (622 Degraw St. between Third and Fourth avenues in Gowanus, (718) 855-3388). Tickets are \$12. For info, visit www.trailofdead.com.	Sexy Seuss Finally, someone took the great stories of Dr. Seuss — and added in the bump and grind. Storybook Burlesque has taken sacred texts (the Bible, anyone?) and made them sexy, so it only seems natural to merge the Cat in the Hat and right, Spandex. This show could ruin your childhood memories — but spawn plenty of adult fantasies. 8 pm. "Storybook Burlesque" at Galapagos Art Space (16 Main St. at Water Street in DUMBO, (718) 222-8500). Tickets are \$15. For info, visit www.storybook-burlesque.com.	See red Sure, Borough President Markowitz was recently mocked on a new blog called "Marty Markowitz Eating," but you know what? There's no one better to officiate the annual red velvet cake bake-off than the Bep. And best of all — after the judging, you get to make your own detailed assessments. Marty would be proud. Noon. Red Velvet Cake contest at the Brooklyn Historical Society (128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 222-4171). Free. For info, visit www.nycreates.org.

NINE DAYS IN BROOKLYN

FRI, FEB. 4

READING, "GREAT PHILOSOPHERS WHO FAILED AT LOVE": A discussion with Andrew Shaffer, Simon Van Booy and Todd Colby. Free. 7 pm. BookCourt (163 Court St. between Pacific and Dean streets in Cobble Hill, (718) 675-3671). www.bookcourt.org.

THEATER, "JOHN GABRIEL BORKMAN": Updated version of Henrik Ibsen's classic by Frank McGuinness. \$25-\$35. Set night and Sun. matinee. 7:30 pm. BAM Harvey Theater (651 Fulton St. at Rockwell Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100). www.bam.org.

THEATER, "FROST/NIXON": Peter Morgan's play, based on the series of televised interviews between former President Nixon and David Frost. \$15-\$15 for seniors and children under 13. 8 pm. Heights Players (26 Willow Pl. between Jordanome and State streets in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 237-2752). www.heightsplayers.org.

TALK, LECTURE BY AN ISRAELI SOLDIER: Sgt. Benjamin Anthony speaks. Free. 8 pm. Park Slope Jewish Center (1420 Eighth Ave. at 14th Street in Park Slope, (718) 765-1453). www.psjc.org.

MUSIC, CLASSICAL CONCERT: With the Israel Chamber Project. \$35-\$30 senior, \$15 student. 8 pm. Bargemusic Fulfiller Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street and Furman Street in DUMBO, (718) 624-2083). www.bargemusic.org.

THEATER, "THE DROWNY CHAPTER ONE": Gallery Players perform Tony-winning musical. \$18-\$14 (seniors and children under 12). 7 pm. Gallery Players (199 14th St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Park Slope, (212) 352-3101). gallery-players.com.

MUSIC, CENTRAL BROOKLYN JAZZ ALL-STARS: Free. 9 pm. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100). www.bam.org.

MUSIC, RICH MEDINA: \$5-\$15. 9 pm. Brooklyn Bowl (64 Wythe Ave. between N. 11th and N. 12th streets in Williamsburg, (718) 963-3369). www.brooklynbowl.com.

SAT, FEB. 5

PERFORMANCE

THEATER, "JOHN GABRIEL BORKMAN": 2 pm and 7:30 pm. See Friday, Feb. 4.

THEATER, "THE DROWNY CHAPTER ONE": 8 pm. See Friday, Feb. 4.

MUSIC, THE SHONODES: With bandle Blue Ox and Scarce. \$8. 8 pm. Rock Shop (249 Fourth Ave. between Carroll and President streets in Park Slope, (718) 230-5740). www.therockshopny.com.

THEATER, "FROST/NIXON": 8 pm. See Friday, Feb. 4.

THEATER, "THE GINGERBREAD LADY": Ridge Repertory Company presents Neil Simon's comedy. \$18. 8 pm. Bay Ridge Jewish Center (8025 Fourth Ave. at 81st Street in Bay Ridge, (718) 836-3103). www.bayridgemeetcenter.org.

MUSIC, CLASSICAL CONCERT: Selections by Schumann, Dvorak. Piano featuring Yousef Quarter. \$40-\$15 senior, \$15 student. 8 pm. Bargemusic Fulfiller Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street and Furman Street in DUMBO, (718) 624-2083). www.bargemusic.org.

MUSIC, MARTHA REDBONE: Free. 9 pm. BAM Cafe (30 Lafayette Ave. near Ashland Place and St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100). www.bam.org.

SALES AND MARKETS

ARTISTS & FLEAS: 8 am-4 pm. (70 N. Seventh St. between Wythe and Kent avenues in Williamsburg, (718) 301-5765). artistsandfleas.com.

PARK SLOPE GREENMARKET: Brooklyn's answer to Union Square. 9 am-4 pm. Grand Army Plaza (Union Street at Flatbush Avenue in Park Slope, (212) 788-7900). cncny.org.

BROOKLYN FLEA: 100 vendors on three floors. 10am-6pm. Skyline One Hanson Pl. at Flatbush Avenue in Fort Greene, (718) 230-0400). www.brooklynflea.com.

BROOKLYN INDIE MARKET: Collective of fashion and product designers. 11 am-7 pm. (Smith and Union streets in Carroll Gardens, (718) 310-7635). brooklynindiemarket.com.

OTHER

DANCE, KIDS PERFORMANCES: Hosted by Dancewave. \$20-\$15 students with valid id. \$12 kids under 12. 3 pm. Kumbia Theater at Long Island University (Dutch and Flatbush avenues in Downtown, (718) 222-4696). www.dancewave.org.

FILM, BLACK CINEMA FESTIVAL: "I Will Follow" and "Coming Back for More." \$12. 6:50-9:30 pm. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100). www.bam.org.

DANCE, "RECARDOING ESSENTIAL BODIES": 8 pm. See Friday, Feb. 4.

SUN, FEB. 6

Super Bowl Sunday

PERFORMANCE

THEATER, "FROST/NIXON": 2 pm. See Friday, Feb. 4.

MON, FEB. 7

COMMUNITY BOARD 6 & Executive Committee: 6:30 pm. Cobble Hill Community Board (718) 260-2578.

TUES, FEB. 8

COMMUNITY BOARD 1: Combined public hearing and full board meeting. 6:30 pm. Sunning 40th Street Center (211 Anisole St. at Manhattan Avenue in Williamsburg, (718) 389-0009). www.cb1brooklyn.org.

WED, FEB. 9

COMMUNITY BOARD 2: Monthly full board meeting. 6:30 pm. Polytech University (5 Metrotech Center Way Street at Myrtle Avenue Promenade in Downtown, (718) 596-5410).

COMMUNITY BOARD 4: Full board meeting. 6:30 pm. John Jay HS (227 Seventh Ave. between Fourth and Fifth streets in Park Slope, (718) 643-3027). www.brooklyncbd4.org.

To list an event in the Civic Calendar, e-mail Calendar@cnglobal.com

CIVIC CALENDAR

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Member: **SNY** **NYP** **SRDS**

'Shalom' to Israeli chicken

Israeli Braised Chicken

Makes 3-4 servings
2 2- to 3-pound chickens cut in eighths
3 tbs. olive oil
1 medium onion, large dice
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 tbs. Fresh ginger root, minced
1 1/2 tbs. ground cumin
1 tbs. Spanish paprika
1 tbs. Whole black peppercorns
2 Bay leaves
3 tbs. Kosher salt
2 cups orange juice

Get about a gallon of water on the fire and bring it to a boil. Then pre-heat the oven at 325 F. Rinse the chicken parts in cold water and peel off all the skin. Using a knife, scrape as much of the fat off as possible. Don't worry if you don't get it all off. Gently place the cleaned chicken in the pot of water (it's OK if it is not boiling yet; just leave it in there just until it does come to a boil). Remove.
Place the chicken aside and let it dry. Reserve the liquid. Put the olive oil in a large sauté pan until it just about smokes. Then brown the chicken parts on both sides. Again, make sure that the chicken is dry if not it is going to splatter hot oil all over the place.



Worth crossing the road for: Joe Raiola uses cumin in his braised chicken (and then he eats it up).

Place the chicken in a deep casserole dish. Add the onions, garlic and ginger to the same sauté pan and sauté till golden brown. Add the dry ingredients and let them go for about a minute. Add the orange juice to the pan and let that simmer for about a minute. Add the spice mixture over the chicken and add more of the chicken broth to just about cover the chicken. Put it in the oven uncovered.

Slow and low, baby, that's the trick. Braise it until the chicken is just about falling off the bone about three hours. Flip the chicken about every 45 minutes. This dish goes really well with Israeli couscous. Nothing like a home cooked meal.
Joe Raiola is executive chef at Morton's The Steakhouse (339 Adams St. between Willoughby and Tillary streets in Downtown, (718) 596-2700).

PrimeTime

By Joe Raiola



Last year, my beautiful wife Abby and I visited her family in Israel.

I was a little apprehensive at first, but after sampling the regional cuisine, I felt much more relaxed. All of the food I tasted was exceptional; but the one dish that stuck in my mind was my aunt-in-law's braised chicken.

Every Thursday, Cohava would get up early and cook for the entire family (it is kind of like the Israeli version of my Italian Sunday dinner). She knew I'm a chef, and was honored that I wanted to get up so early to help her cook. One of the many dishes she and I made was this delicious braised chicken.

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WE NOW HAVE A FULL LIQUOR LICENCE

Crop to Cup to Gowanus

By Laura Gottesdiener
for The Brooklyn Paper

Coffee drinkers of the world, unite—Soviet-style ownership is dead at Crop to Cup.

The cooperative coffee joint, which closed its Atlantic Avenue shop last year, reopened on Friday on Third Avenue in Gowanus—and this time around Marxism's been jettisoned for good old American Capitalism and even better Burundi beans.

The cafe, formerly on Atlantic Avenue between Clinton and Henry streets in Brooklyn Heights, used to share their space with three other vendors. This collective style of ownership was nice in theory, but in reality it meant there was no one boss to ensure a reliable supply of those delicious asparagus sandwiches.

Now Crop to Cup is the sole tenant at the Third Avenue lo-



Crop to Cup employee Alexis Grossman shows off her handmade sign for the shop's new location on Third Avenue in Gowanus.

cation, and will serve as a top-notch coffee shop and as a coffee college.

The "campus" is still under construction, but co-owner Taylor Mork is installing a "coffee education station" for tastings and classes on coffee production.

To keep pace with its curriculum, Crop to Cup has upgraded its brewing, too.

Gone are the olden days of massive drip coffee makers. Crop to Cup now prepares its cups one at a time by pouring hot water through state-of-the-art, Japanese-designed porcelain cones.

"Single-cup brewing really highlights the flavor of our beans," said Alexis Grossman, an employee.

Add to that chocolate, cranberry ginger, cheddar thyme or apple corn scones from Melissa and Emily Elen at Four and Twenty Blackbirds down the street, and you've got a reason to cheer the fall of Soviet Union.

Crop to Cup Cafe (541 Third Ave. between 12th and 14th streets in Gowanus, (347) 850-2707).

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(Choice of One)

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Surf & Turf add \$5

DESSERT
(Choice of One)

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APPETIZERS
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ENTRÉE
(Choice of One)

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DESSERT
(Choice of One)

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SOUP OF THE DAY

LES PLATS / MAIN COURSE
ORGANIC CHICKEN POT PIE
Mixed green salad & house vinaigrette or
MINT PESTO CRUSTED LAMB TOP ROUND
French beans, olives & sautéed new potatoes, red wine sauce or
ROASTED COD FILET WRAPPED IN PROSCIUTTO (optional)
Fragrant beans & bok choy, whole grain mustard sauce or
MUSHROOM & PARMESAN REGGIANO CHEESE RISOTTO
Dressed with truffle oil

DESSERT
OSKAR'S FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE CAKE
Warm Boursin chocolate cake with vanilla ice cream or
UPSIDE DOWN PINEAPPLE CAKE
With coconut ice cream or
LAVENDER CREME BRULEE

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Continued from page 6

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EVENT, SPELLING BEE
Hosted by comedian Jen Dzura. Winners get free booze. Free. 7 pm. Peto's Candy Store (709 Lorimer St. at Richardson Street in Williamsburg, (718) 302-2770, www.petcandystore.com.

TUES, FEB. 8
FILM, "FAIR PLAY": Documentary focusing on South Africa. Free. 6:30 pm. Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch (Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza in Park Slope, (718) 230-2100).

MUSIC, ...AND YOU WILL KNOW US BY THE TRAIL OF DEAD: Record release party. \$12. 8 pm. Littlefield (622 Degraw St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Gowanus, (718) 855-5388, www.littlefieldnyc.com).

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READING, TABOO OF THE BLACK EYED PEAS: Author of "Fallin' Up." Free. 7 pm. Powerhouse Arena (37 Main St. at Water Street in DUMBO, (718) 646-3049, www.powerhousearena.com).

WORKSHOP, URBAN BUSH WOMEN: Dance movement class. \$15 (\$10 for students). 7 pm. A.R.T. NY (138 S. Oxford St. at Lafayette Avenue in Fort Greene, (718) 395-4527, www.urbanbushwomen.org).

MUSIC, ROOTS & RUCKUS: Night of folk, old-time and bluegrass music. Free. 8 pm. Jubay (315 Columbia St. between Hamilton Avenue and Woodhull Street in Columbia Street Waterfront, (718) 395-3241, www.alopy.biz).

THURS, FEB. 10
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OUTDOORS AND TOURS
READING, PATRICIA O'TOOLE: Author of "The Valentine's Day That Changed America." Also includes a trolley tour. Free. 1 pm. Green-Wood Cemetery (25th St. at Fifth Avenue in Green-Wood Heights, (718) 768-7300).

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CRRAFT FAIR: Handmade jewelry, clothing, pottery, soaps, sweets and other treats at the Volunteer's event. Free. 11:30 am-6 pm. Brooklyn Historical Society (128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 222-4111, www.brooklynhistory.org).

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READING, PATRICIA O'TOOLE: Author of "The Valentine's Day That Changed America." Also includes a trolley tour. Free. 1 pm. Green-Wood Cemetery (25th St. at Fifth Avenue in Green-Wood Heights, (718) 768-7300).



Martha Redbone performs at BAM Cafe on Feb. 5

LYN RENAISSANCE: With percussionist Talu Green, gospel octet Singers with a Testimony, and poet Climbing Poetree. Free. 9 pm. BAM Harvey (651 Fulton St. at Rockwell Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100, www.bam.org).

FILM, "THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW": As part of the 13-film retrospective "The Susan Sarandon Picture Show." \$12 (\$7 for members). 11:30 pm. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100, www.bam.org).

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FRI, FEB. 11
CRRAFT FAIR: Handmade jewelry, clothing, pottery, soaps, sweets and other treats at the Volunteer's event. Free. 11:30 am-6 pm. Brooklyn Historical Society (128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 222-4111, www.brooklynhistory.org).

FILM, "JOE GOULD'S SECRET": As part of the 13-film retrospective "The Susan Sarandon Picture Show." \$12 (\$7 for members). 4:30 pm. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100, www.bam.org).

FILM, "PRETTY BABY": As part of the 13-film retrospective "The Susan Sarandon Picture Show." \$12 (\$7 for members). 6:50 pm. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave. near St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100, www.bam.org).

THEATER, "THE DROWSY CHAPERONE": 8 pm. See Friday, Feb. 4.

THEATER, "FROST/NIXON": 8 pm. See Friday, Feb. 4.

THEATER, "IN THE PONY PALACE/FOOTBALL": 8 pm. See Thursday, Feb. 10.

MUSIC, CLASSICAL CONCERT: Selections by Mozart, Schubert, with Salome Chamber Orchestra. \$45. 8 pm. Bargemusic (Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street and Furman Street in DUMBO, (718) 624-2083, www.bargemusic.org).

NERD NITE: Pre-Valentine's Day presentations about adult virgins, false memories and "Top Gun" featuring Father Thomas Paine. \$10. 9 pm. Galapagos Art Space (16 Main St. at Water Street in DUMBO, (718) 222-8500, www.galapagosartspace.com).

MUSIC, BLACK BROOK: Percussionist Talu Green, gospel octet Singers with a Testimony, and poet Climbing Poetree. Free. 9 pm. BAM Harvey (651 Fulton St. at Rockwell Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100, www.bam.org).

PERFORMANCE
THEATER, "THE DROWSY CHAPERONE": 2 pm. See Friday, Feb. 4.
MUSIC, REGGAE CONCERT: Gregory Isaacs performs. \$35-\$45 (\$40-\$45 at door). 8 pm. Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College (2900 Campus Rd. at Field Place in Flatbush, (718) 951-4500, www.brooklyncenterforthearts.org).

THEATER, "FROST/NIXON": 8 pm. See Friday, Feb. 4.
THEATER, "IN THE PONY PALACE/FOOTBALL": 8 pm. See Thursday, Feb. 10.

MUSIC, CLASSICAL CONCERT: Selections by Bach, Rossini, Schubert, with Salome Chamber Orchestra. \$45. 8 pm. Bargemusic (Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street and Furman Street in DUMBO, (718) 624-2083, www.bargemusic.org).

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DUMBO, (718) 624-2083, www.bargemusic.org.
MUSIC, "BLACK BROOKLYN RENAISSANCE: The New Generation": 8 pm. See Friday, Feb. 11.
MUSIC, THE BEN HOLMES QUARTET: Improvisational jazz concert. \$10. 8:30 pm. Beam Music Studio (168 Seventh St. between Second and Third avenues in Gowanus, Beamsbrooklyn.com).

SALES AND MARKETS
PARK SLOPE GREENMARKET: 9 am-4 pm. See Saturday, Feb. 5.
CRRAFT FAIR: 10 am-5 pm. See Friday, Feb. 11.
BROOKLYN FLEA: 10 am-6 pm. See Saturday, Feb. 5.
BROOKLYN INDIE MARKET: 11 am-7 pm. See Saturday, Feb. 5.

OTHER
VALENTINE FAIR: Valentine's Day-themed arts and crafts. Free. 10 am. John Jay HS (237 Seventh Ave. in Park Slope, (718) 832-4306).

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PTA...

Continued from page 1

three years, and at some point allegedly wrote at least two checks to herself — though cops said that they're pouring over receipts to see exactly how much Hogan swiped.

Cops also noted that reports of the group losing up to \$100,000, first reported in the Daily News, are "wildly and completely inaccurate."

The newspaper also reported that Hogan spent the money on "fertility treatments" — possibly at her own business.

It's unclear how Hogan allegedly pulled it off, but it's certain that the parents oversaw — or failed to oversee — Hogan's actions and the group's budget, which is not subject to mandatory city audits. Parents said on Monday that they would form an audit committee soon.

"This is a sad day for us," said PS 29 Principal Melina Woods. "In 10 years of seen this community built on trust and relationships. This is a tough time we're going through, but we have to get out of it together."

CAMPBELL

Continued from page 1

Monday night in Cobble Hill was cold and quiet — maybe a little too quiet — as I did my job by attending a PTA meeting at PS 29. On the way, I couldn't help but notice about six young gentlemen hawking it up behind me, throwing snowballs at passing cars, laughing and yelling as their weapons of mini destruction made contact.

Then all hell broke loose with one simple phrase: "Let's run a train! Let's run a train!" one of the hoodlums yelled.

Now, if I had been in Manhattan, I would have panicked, but this was Cobble Hill — the safest neighborhood in the city. Plus, I was carrying my journalistic toolbox — you know, the one filled with truth, justice, integrity and caffeine suppositories — so I felt invulnerable.

I felt a hand smack the back of my head as one of the kids — maybe 14 years old — ran by. Only a moment passed before the second kid, this one older, shoved me into the glass facade of Bocca Lupo at Henry and Warren streets. I didn't have time to react before a third certain pushed me to the ground.

"Great," I thought, "I'm going to get robbed. I'll be in the 76th Precinct police blotter. And, worse, Gerah will make me write it up instead of sending someone else. That guy is a jerk. Oh, wait, let me get back to this robbery."

But this was no robbery. Once I hit the ground — taking most of the impact on my left hand — the final two jerks stood above me and pelted me with snowballs. The group fled, laughing.

There I sat, defeated, with a bleeding hand and a group of Bocca Lupo customers staring at me from inside the warm, inviting restaurant (try the veal).

Damn kids. Now, I could have called my editor and told him I'd been brutally assaulted — then again, he would've asked what hospital I was at, so that never would have worked any way. And given the spate of attacks related to the snowpocalypse, he never would have let me leave the story.

For example, on Jan. 30, four thugs threw snowballs at a 40-year-old man at Hoyt and Butler streets, and then robbed him. Worse, a couple of "trowdy teens" recently threw chunks of ice at a pregnant woman near Hoyt and Bond streets.

It's a cruel, cruel world out there. I was injured on the way to a press event — but I had to keep fighting on. I may have been the victim of a crime, but if I had gone home, the only crime would have been my failure to bring you the news.

I am a hero.

The Brooklyn Paper

KIDS • SCHOOL • STYLE • TEENS • CAMPS • MUSIC

PARENT

She can handle the truth!

Allowing people to speak their minds truthfully is a hard thing to do in one's home, with one's children. Like a preacher, who says the words of salvation he himself needs to hear, I am always espousing the necessity of truth to remember how important it is, especially because it is often totally socially unacceptable.

Eli, at 9, has a condition I liken to Tourette's Syndrome — he can repeat the word "penis" over and over thousands of times a minute. I gather that is because, like most men, that is what is on his mind. The truth of what he is thinking about is simple, yet I need to teach him to train himself to keep it in check. I feel so often like a hypocrite, then, because I am always begging him often to tell me what's on his mind.



Fearless Parenting

By Stephanie Thompson

his mind.

The same hypocrisy issue arose recently when Eli proclaimed at lunch with a friend that he'd rather play the iPod Touch instead of being social.

Denied his device, he whined, "I'm bored! I'm not fun to talk! I have nothing to say!"

When I chastised him for being rude, he looked right at me and quoted me back to me: "What? I'm just telling the truth..."

As much as his sassy response irks, his throwing my own concept back in my face is actually a good reminder: I'm glad to know what he's thinking so I can help him work through things.

In this case, having a window into how difficult (and boring) he finds it to relate to others sometimes allowed me to have a serious conversation with him about the need to be social, not to isolate oneself because it is easier than connecting.

The way to avoid life's major pitfalls is to face the truth, but the problem is, as you call from that famous scene in "A Few Good Men," so few people can handle the truth.

I'll quiet my kids' personal "truths" for comfort sake, it won't change their thoughts. It just encourages them to lie to me. Then, we will grow further and further apart.

Our family's non-PC ways wreaked havoc on the ears of a young Catholic babysitter. We found a note after she left that said everything she had been afraid to before she left, wordlessly. Their language had shocked her.

"They talked about body parts," she wrote, "(boobs, butts, balls)." I ripped up the note, for which I'm now very sorry (at the very least, it would have been nice to pull out on their wedding days).

Truth is a tangled web — and no two persons' truth is the same. Even though I agree that we should be able to control ourselves so we don't offend everyone, extreme levels of "self-control" have done more harm than good to society. Holding everything in is ultimately damaging to our mental and physical health, and political correctness has created its own kind of monstrosity.

madness where we're not allowed to call things what they are, as if we don't all know.

Letting her go watch YouTube, where they pick up rude terms, or taking them to more adult movies like "The Green Hornet" (great movie!) is always a little dicey. My intention is not that my children learn "the truth" about everything all at once. Luckily, they

mostly self-censor. I have seen them flip past girls in bikinis quickly with an "oooh, inappropriate!" so I trust that pen is not on their radar (yet). I try not to be too finicky about what they see and hear, but I ask often about it so we can discuss terms they repeat without understanding, terms they will hear on the playground soon enough if they haven't already.

Words are the only windows we have into a person's brain. License for a child to speak freely is crucial to knowing them and helping them know themselves.

Even though I'd rather not know some "truths," there is no denying them. To do so is a kind of death far greater than the death of innocence.



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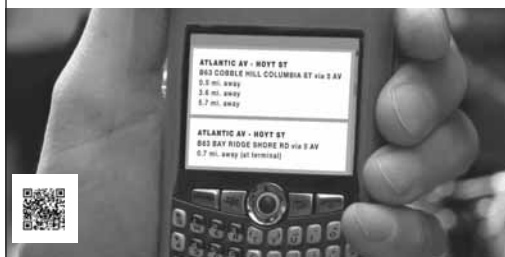
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- CEO of NYC-based supermarket chain, (*Progressive Grocer*, 1986)

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- A lobbyist for the grocery workers' union, (*The New York Times*, 2010)

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*SOURCE: "FoodWorks: A Vision to Improve NYC's Food System"